

#1760

REGULATION ASSIGNMENT CONTROL SHEET

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ANALYST

ASSIGNED: CAREY

TYPE OF ACTION: NFP

TITLE: REHABILITATION SHORT-TERM TRAINING

RECEIVED: 9/28/01

DATE ASSIGNED: 9/28/01

DATE DUE: 10/5/01

ANALYST SIGNATURE: Shelley Carey

COMPLETION DATE: 10-5-01

FINAL APPROVAL: Joseph Schubert

DATE: Oct 12, 2001

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REG PART: 84-246D

4000-01-U

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Rehabilitation Short-Term Training

AGENCY: Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, Department of Education.

ACTION: Notice of final priority.

SUMMARY: The Assistant Secretary for the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services announces a priority under the Rehabilitation Short-Term Training program. The Assistant Secretary may use this priority for competitions in fiscal year (FY) 2002 and in later years. We take this action to focus on training in areas of national need. We intend the priority to improve the leadership among top-level managers and administrators of the State Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program.

DATES: This priority is effective (INSERT DATE 30 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER).

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Christine Marschall, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW., room 3325, Switzer Building, Washington, DC 20202-2649

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SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The State Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program continues to undergo significant change. Vocational rehabilitation (VR) programs are serving increased numbers of individuals with significant disabilities, are seeking to reach unserved and underserved populations, and increasingly recognize that their success in promoting the employment of their consumers depends in part on the strength of their linkages with employers and with generic employment and training programs. In their efforts to improve the employment outcomes of the individuals they serve, State VR agencies must remain alert to this ever-changing environment.

The changed environment of State VR agencies demands a different set of skills from leaders and managers than has traditionally been required. Managers and leaders in the VR system need to develop new skills to respond effectively to the changing demands. We have determined that it is in the best interest of the State VR Services Program to

develop a leadership training program that focuses on leadership skills as applied to the unique issues facing the VR agencies in a peer setting. Progressive levels of training are needed to meet the varying needs of administrators and directors. One institute would ensure consistency in training and provide for better quality control. State agencies would be required to provide some degree of support to the program.

We published a notice of proposed priority for this program in the Federal Register on August 6, 2001, volume 66, number 151, pages 41125-41128. The notice of proposed priority included a discussion of the significant issues and analysis used in the determination of this priority.

There are no differences between the notice of proposed priority and this notice of final priority.

ANALYSIS OF COMMENTS AND CHANGES: In response to our invitation in the notice of proposed priority, three (3) parties submitted comments on the proposed priority. An analysis of the comments and of any changes in the priority since publication of the notice of proposed priority follows.

Comments: One commenter recommended that we require the project to be based on academic credit and lead to a formal certificate or degree.

Discussion: While in Long Term Training grants there is a statutory requirement that training be based on academic credit and lead to a formal certificate or degree, there is no authority to include this requirement in the Rehabilitation Short Term Training priority. However, programs that provide academic credit and lead to a formal certificate or degree are not prohibited under the priority.

Comments: One commenter recommended a requirement that the training be directly linked to the Comprehensive System of Personnel Development requirements.

Discussion: We agree that a link with the requirements of the Comprehensive System of Personnel Development is important. We do not agree that this link is appropriately included in the priority statement. We will include it with the background materials provided in the Application Packet.

Comments: One commenter recommended that the project be sponsored without state agency financial participation through the use of in-service funds.

Discussion: The notice of proposed priority indicates the benefits associated with the financial participation of the state programs. We have determined that the benefits justify the retention of the participation requirement.

Comments: One commenter indicated that providing the training via a single project ensures consistency and relevance of the curriculum and supports the elements of the notice of proposed priority.

Changes: None

Note: This notice does not solicit applications. In any year in which we choose to use this proposed priority, we invite applications through a notice in the Federal Register. When inviting applications we designate the priority as absolute, competitive preference, or invitational. The effect of each type of priority follows:

Absolute priority: Under an absolute priority we consider only applications that meet the priority (34 CFR 75.105(c)(3)).

Competitive preference priority: Under a competitive preference priority we give competitive preference to an application by either (1) awarding additional points, depending on how well or the extent to which the application meets the priority (34 CFR 75.105(c)(2)(i)); or (2) selecting an application that meets the priority over an application of comparable merit that does not meet the priority (34 CFR 75.105(c)(2)(ii)).

Invitational priority: Under an invitational priority we are particularly interested in applications that meet

the invitational priority. However, we do not give an application that meets the priority a competitive or absolute preference over other applications (34 CFR 75.105(c)(1)).

PRIORITY:

National Rehabilitation Leadership Institute

We will fund one project to establish a National Rehabilitation Leadership Institute that will focus on developing the leadership skills of top-level managers and administrators in State VR agencies. The project must have plans for addressing the leadership needs in all VR agencies funded under the Act and programs funded under section 121 of the Act. The project must employ a curriculum that includes several levels of training to meet the needs of audiences ranging from new State administrators and directors to seasoned administrators and directors. The project's curriculum must include sequential courses that allow for repeated practice of newly learned skills over time, with performance feedback. The project must provide training in a peer setting. The project must coordinate its training activities with activities conducted under the State Vocational Rehabilitation Unit In-Service Training program, the Rehabilitation Continuing Education Program and the

National Technical Assistance centers funded by RSA. These programs are also charged with improving the leadership skills of State agency personnel. Therefore, collaboration and coordination are necessary.

The project must establish an advisory committee that includes Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) central and regional office representatives, representatives of State VR agency administrators and trainers, rehabilitation counselors, VR clients, Regional Continuing Education Centers, other educators and trainers of VR personnel, tribes and tribal agencies and others as determined to be appropriate by the grantee and RSA. This committee must provide substantial input on and direction to the training curriculum, including the specific VR issues to be incorporated.

The project must include an evaluation component based upon clear, specific performance and outcome measures. The results must be reported in its annual progress report. The project must be designed to ensure that State agencies will contribute to the costs of the participant's training.

National Education Goals

The eight National Education Goals focus the Nation's education reform efforts and provide a framework for improving teaching and learning.

This priority would address the National Education Goal that every adult American will be literate and will possess the knowledge and skills necessary to compete in a global economy and exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship.

Intergovernmental Review

This program is subject to Executive Order 12372 and the regulations in 34 CFR part 79. One of the objectives of the Executive order is to foster an intergovernmental partnership and a strengthened federalism. The Executive order relies on processes developed by State and local governments for coordination and review of proposed Federal financial assistance.

This document provides early notification of our specific plans and actions for this program.

Applicable Program Regulations: 34 CFR parts 385 and 390.

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(Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number: 84.246D, Rehabilitation Short-Term Training)

PROGRAM AUTHORITY: 29 U.S.C. 772

Dated:

Francis V. Corrigan,
Deputy Director
National Institute on
Disability and Rehabilitation
Research.